United Nations S/PV.4732

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4732nd meeting

Friday, 28 March 2003, 12.30 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Traoré	(Guinea)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Mexico	Ms. Garcia Guerra
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

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03-30098 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Iraq in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mahmoud (Iraq) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2003/381, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/2003/381) before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in French*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1472 (2003).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): At the outset, I should like to express the appreciation of the delegation of Pakistan to Ambassador Gunter Pleuger and to the German delegation for the heroic efforts that they have made in the past several days to evolve this unanimous adoption of a resolution to provide humanitarian relief to the Iraqi people in this present hour of their need.

This effort, and the outcome which we have achieved this morning, is a positive signal that the Security Council can be restored to the path of unity and that we can, even in difficult circumstances, act together when the political will of our Governments can be combined around a common cause.

Pakistan's principal concern, even before the onset of hostilities, was the welfare of the Iraqi people. We believe that the Iraqi people, who have suffered for a dozen years under sanctions, should not be made to pay doubly by the outbreak of hostilities which were no fault of theirs.

The Government of Pakistan has announced that it is prepared to provide emergency relief assistance to the people of Iraq, and we stand ready to do so as soon as arrangements can be made. We have allocated amounts of foodstuffs, tents, blankets, medicines and medical equipment. Pakistani medical teams are prepared to proceed on short notice to Iraq for this purpose.

We joined in sponsoring the draft resolution because we believed that the international community needed to respond rapidly and appropriately to the needs of the Iraqi people. We would, however, wish to underline once again that there are certain principles which will guide our position today and in future with regard to dealing with the rights and conditions of the Iraqi people.

First, we would consistently demand respect for the inalienable rights of the people of Iraq, including over their natural resources. We are glad that the resolution takes account of this principle.

Secondly, the situation in which the Iraqi people find themselves is not one of their own making. Therefore, in the provision of humanitarian assistance and in future, we must be circumspect and ensure that the Iraqi people are not called upon to pay the additional costs which the current conflict may impose on the operations of the oil for food programme.

The resolution has authorized the Secretary-General to undertake humanitarian assistance for Iraq. First and foremost, we believe that the response of the international community to the adoption of this resolution should be a positive response to the Secretary-General's flash appeal of yesterday seeking funds from the international community for the Iraqi people. We trust that the unanimity which has been displayed in the Council will be reflected in the unanimity of the international community's positive response to the Secretary-General's appeal.

Finally, let me just say that the Secretary-General will need to coordinate his activities in Iraq with those who happen to be in actual control of any part of that country. We have accepted that reality in this resolution, but this is without prejudice to our view on the legality or otherwise of the situation which the Secretary-General may find on the ground in the operation of the programme of assistance for the Iraqi people.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the position of the Syrian Arab Republic — which is committed to the resolutions of international legitimacy — and with the role of the United Nations and the need to revitalize that role in response to the humanitarian needs of the brotherly Iraqi people by restarting the oil for food programme, and in the light of the fact that the Security Council adopted this resolution as the first resolution to address the repercussions of the American-British invasion of Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic would like to stress that it voted in favour of the resolution for humanitarian purposes, as its sole objective is to relieve Iraqi citizens' suffering, which has reached new heights as a result of this war.

Our vote should in no way be construed as an acceptance of the American-British occupation; it should be understood as an attempt to continue to work to put an end to that occupation and to achieve the withdrawal of the invading forces from the Republic of Iraq. In addition, our vote should not be interpreted by any side as granting legitimacy to the invasion. The resolution's contents — including the references in operative paragraphs 4 and 5 to the Secretary-General undertaking certain measures as an urgent first step and performing additional functions as a second step — mean only that we are trying to cooperate with the current Iraqi Government in that urgent work.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have just unanimously adopted a resolution as a step that we were obliged to take in connection with the need to resolve the Iraqi population's humanitarian problems caused by the military actions of the United States and the United Kingdom against Iraq. First and foremost, those problems should be solved on the basis of the Fourth Geneva Convention, under whose provisions those who began this war bear responsibility for meeting the civilian population's humanitarian needs. Indeed, this resolution reaffirms that responsibility.

With regard to the United Nations humanitarian programme for Iraq, the resolution's adjustments to the programme have a technical and provisional nature and make it possible to use contracts that have been signed but not yet implemented in order to solve individual practical humanitarian issues caused by the war. The resolution does not change the essence of the humanitarian programme, and it fully retains the Security Council's control over the United Nations special account that is accumulating revenue from the export of Iraqi oil.

The adoption of the resolution, of course, in no way signifies any type of legitimization of the military action being carried out by the coalition in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The resolution clearly calls the participants in the coalition "occupying Powers" whose actions on the occupied territory must be guided strictly by all norms of international humanitarian law, without exception. The resolution casts no doubt on Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and it requires respect for the right of the Iraqi people to independently decide their own political future and to exercise control over their natural resources.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): I did not intend to take the floor, but since other delegations have made their views known after the voting, I thought that, as we have been working hard over the past week under the Secretary-General's mandate as Chair of the Security

Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1991) concerning Iraq, I should just like to say a few words.

First, I should like to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, who shows by his presence how important this resolution is, and to thank our collaborators in all delegations — not only in the German delegation — for the work that they have done. The negotiations were very difficult, because many complicated issues had to be addressed. I should also like to thank our collaborators and my colleagues around this table for their spirit of compromise, which enabled us to produce a draft resolution that could be adopted by consensus. I understand, of course, that if you negotiate a compromise, it can never satisfy everyone in every respect. Therefore, I am particularly grateful for the spirit of compromise and cooperation that we found, which led 14 members of the Council to sponsor the draft resolution and led to a unanimous vote in the end.

I should like to make two points that I think are important for the general public, which has been waiting for this decision to be taken for the whole of the past week.

First, I believe it is important that, after a very heated debate on the complicated Iraq issue over the past six weeks, the Security Council found its way back to a unity of purpose, which was to provide Iraq's suffering people with necessary humanitarian goods.

My second important point is that we have enabled the Secretary-General and the Office of the Iraq Programme to restart the oil for food programme as soon as the situation on the ground permits. Once again, I should like to stress the dimension of this task. We heard from the Secretary-General that the food basket consists of 80 per cent of the goods coming from the oil for food programme. Sixty per cent of the people of Iraq depend on those rations: that is more than 40 million people who must be fed. They had to be fed before the war, they need food more now, and they will need it even more after the war.

I think the fact that the Security Council has taken this decision to enable the Secretary-General to feed Iraq's suffering population is a positive signal, and it has been strengthened by the adoption of the resolution by consensus in the Secretary-General's presence. It is a signal to the people of Iraq that they have not been forgotten, and it is a signal to the international community and to international humanitarian organizations that they must do whatever they can to alleviate the plight of a suffering people.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence here this morning and for the initiative he took in proposing that we work on this resolution. I think that today's Security Council vote modifying the oil for food programme marks an important step which the United States has favoured from the moment that United Nations personnel were withdrawn and the programme was suspended. We join others in welcoming the strong show of support by Council members for this resolution, which helps address the immediate needs of the people of Iraq.

We also thank the German delegation, led by Ambassador Pleuger, for the leadership they have shown in the negotiations over the past week which lead to the achievement of this resolution. Last, but certainly not least, we have benefited immensely from the advice and counsel of Mr. Benon Sevan, the Executive Director of the Office of the Iraq Programme, who has been with us throughout this process. We thank him very much.

We have full confidence that the Secretary-General and the United Nations Office of the Iraq Programme will effectively carry out the important task of resuming the programme in the weeks ahead. For its part, the United States will facilitate the necessary coordination on the ground in Iraq between coalition authorities and the United Nations and associated relief agency staff, as oil for food supplies and other humanitarian assistance arrive and are distributed as circumstances on the ground permit.

The resumption of the oil for food programme complements extensive United States efforts to address the humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq. Humanitarian aid from a variety of sources is already beginning to arrive. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are on the ground providing humanitarian assistance. Our own bilateral humanitarian aid commitments will remain robust and long-term. We urge all governments and donors to contribute generously in this effort.

The United States is gratified that the Council has been able come together to take this step to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq.

Today's vote will translate into concrete results on the ground. We welcome that. The people of Iraq have suffered too long under circumstances not of their own choosing and under a regime whose days are numbered.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, who had warned us about these problems and who supported us throughout the discussions, reminding us, time and again, of the emergency nature of our work so we would arrive at an agreement on the text as soon as possible.

The French delegation is gratified at the result, the adoption of this very important text to enable the Iraqi people to receive the necessary food and medical supplies as soon as possible. It was important that the text recall principles, humanitarian law instruments, in particular the Geneva Conventions, humanitarian access to the populations and Iraqi sovereignty over its resources. We also benefited from Mr. Benon Sevan's assistance in order to find the necessary technical adjustments to the oil for food programme in order to meet the most pressing needs. We fully trust the Secretary-General to implement the mandate we have now entrusted to him.

The French delegation was a sponsor of this text. It worked actively to ensure that the result would be rapidly forthcoming. We were worried when discussions lagged, and were very glad that results were achieved. We would like to pay tribute to the work of Ambassador Pleuger who helped us tremendously in finding this consensus.

In conclusion, we are glad the Security Council, on the basis of this humanitarian text, has recovered its unity. That is also a very important result.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): Bulgaria welcomes the fact that the Council has unanimously adopted this resolution, which deals with an especially urgent matter of major importance. First, we are grateful to Ambassador Pleuger and the German delegation for the excellent work they have done in recent days. I will repeat what I said yesterday. For Bulgaria, the adoption of this resolution would not have been possible without the political as well as moral prestige of the Secretary-General, who has brought all of his weight to bear behind these proposals. His influence and prestige have enabled us to regain our unity today. Bulgaria welcomes this as do other delegations.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I offer sincere congratulations to the German Ambassador and his team for their untiring and generous efforts, sensitivity, perseverance and their great elegance in leading this ship to a good port. I would like to reiterate the gratitude and appreciation of my delegation to the German Ambassador and his team.

After a few tense and somber days, today is an important day for the Council, due to the fact that it was able to unite to tackle a serious humanitarian issue.

As the Secretary-General aptly observed a few days ago, the peoples of the world might feel a sense of frustration when they witnessed what was happening in the United Nations Security Council. What happened today can serve to redress the situation, improve our image and restore the unity that must prevail in this important body.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

I would like, as the representative of Guinea, holding the presidency of this Council for the month of March, to express how gratified my delegation is at the unanimous adoption of this resolution on the emergency humanitarian situation in Iraq.

If this resolution had not been adopted, my delegation would be even sadder after all of our collective efforts during the month of March. The adoption of this resolution was indispensable to restoring the credibility of this body. In this regard, I thank the Secretary-General personally for his efforts to bring about this result, as well as the representative of Germany, our colleague Ambassador Pleuger, who did everything in his power during the entire week to establish unanimous support in the Council for this resolution. I thank him.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: I am very happy we have been able to adopt this resolution unanimously. I think it augurs well for future tasks ahead of us. We have many challenging questions and I hope we will be able to approach those tasks with the same spirit.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

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There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in French*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1472 (2003).

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Mr. Akram (Pakistan): At the outset, I should like to express the appreciation of the delegation of Pakistan to Ambassador Gunter Pleuger and to the German delegation for the heroic efforts that they have made in the past several days to evolve this unanimous adoption of a resolution to provide humanitarian relief to the Iraqi people in this present hour of their need.

This effort, and the outcome which we have achieved this morning, is a positive signal that the Security Council can be restored to the path of unity and that we can, even in difficult circumstances, act together when the political will of our Governments can be combined around a common cause.

Pakistan's principal concern, even before the onset of hostilities, was the welfare of the Iraqi people. We believe that the Iraqi people, who have suffered for a dozen years under sanctions, should not be made to pay doubly by the outbreak of hostilities which were no fault of theirs.

The Government of Pakistan has announced that it is prepared to provide emergency relief assistance to the people of Iraq, and we stand ready to do so as soon as arrangements can be made. We have allocated amounts of foodstuffs, tents, blankets, medicines and medical equipment. Pakistani medical teams are prepared to proceed on short notice to Iraq for this purpose.

We joined in sponsoring the draft resolution because we believed that the international community needed to respond rapidly and appropriately to the needs of the Iraqi people. We would, however, wish to underline once again that there are certain principles which will guide our position today and in future with regard to dealing with the rights and conditions of the Iraqi people.

First, we would consistently demand respect for the inalienable rights of the people of Iraq, including over their natural resources. We are glad that the resolution takes account of this principle.

Secondly, the situation in which the Iraqi people find themselves is not one of their own making. Therefore, in the provision of humanitarian assistance and in future, we must be circumspect and ensure that the Iraqi people are not called upon to pay the additional costs which the current conflict may impose on the operations of the oil for food programme.

The resolution has authorized the Secretary-General to undertake humanitarian assistance for Iraq. First and foremost, we believe that the response of the international community to the adoption of this resolution should be a positive response to the Secretary-General's flash appeal of yesterday seeking funds from the international community for the Iraqi people. We trust that the unanimity which has been

displayed in the Council will be reflected in the unanimity of the international community's positive response to the Secretary-General's appeal.

Finally, let me just say that the Secretary-General will need to coordinate his activities in Iraq with those who happen to be in actual control of any part of that country. We have accepted that reality in this resolution, but this is without prejudice to our view on the legality or otherwise of the situation which the Secretary-General may find on the ground in the operation of the programme of assistance for the Iraqi people.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the position of the Syrian Arab Republic — which is committed to the resolutions of international legitimacy — and with the role of the United Nations and the need to revitalize that role in response to the humanitarian needs of the brotherly Iraqi people by restarting the oil for food programme, and in the light of the fact that the Security Council adopted this resolution as the first resolution to address the repercussions of the American-British invasion of Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic would like to stress that it voted in favour of the resolution for humanitarian purposes, as its sole objective is to relieve Iraqi citizens' suffering, which has reached new heights as a result of this war.

Our vote should in no way be construed as an acceptance of the American-British occupation; it should be understood as an attempt to continue to work to put an end to that occupation and to achieve the withdrawal of the invading forces from the Republic of Iraq. In addition, our vote should not be interpreted by any side as granting legitimacy to the invasion. The resolution's contents — including the references in operative paragraphs 4 and 5 to the Secretary-General undertaking certain measures as an urgent first step and performing additional functions as a second step — mean only that we are trying to cooperate with the current Iraqi Government in that urgent work.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have just unanimously adopted a resolution as a step that we were obliged to take in connection with the need to resolve the Iraqi population's humanitarian problems caused by the military actions of the United States and the United Kingdom against Iraq. First and foremost, those problems should be solved on the basis of the Fourth Geneva Convention, under whose provisions those who began this war bear responsibility for meeting the civilian population's humanitarian needs. Indeed, this resolution reaffirms that responsibility.

With regard to the United Nations humanitarian programme for Iraq, the resolution's adjustments to the programme have a technical and provisional nature and make it possible to use contracts that have been signed but not yet implemented in order to solve individual practical humanitarian issues caused by the war. The resolution does not change the essence of the humanitarian programme, and it fully retains the Security Council's control over the United Nations special account that is accumulating revenue from the export of Iraqi oil.

The adoption of the resolution, of course, in no way signifies any type of legitimization of the military action being carried out by the coalition in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The resolution clearly calls the participants in the coalition "occupying Powers" whose actions on the occupied territory must be guided strictly by all norms of international humanitarian law, without exception. The resolution casts no doubt on Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and it requires respect for the right of the Iraqi people to independently decide their own political future and to exercise control over their natural resources.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): I did not intend to take the floor, but since other delegations have made their views known after the voting, I thought that, as we have been working hard over the past week under the Secretary-General's mandate as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1991) concerning Iraq, I should just like to say a few words.

First, I should like to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, who shows by his presence how important this resolution is, and to thank our collaborators in all delegations — not only in the German delegation — for the work that they have done. The negotiations were very difficult, because many complicated issues had to be addressed. I should also like to thank our collaborators and my colleagues around this table for their spirit of compromise, which enabled us to produce a draft resolution that could be adopted by consensus. I understand, of course, that if you negotiate a compromise, it can never satisfy

everyone in every respect. Therefore, I am particularly grateful for the spirit of compromise and cooperation that we found, which led 14 members of the Council to sponsor the draft resolution and led to a unanimous vote in the end.

I should like to make two points that I think are important for the general public, which has been waiting for this decision to be taken for the whole of the past week.

First, I believe it is important that, after a very heated debate on the complicated Iraq issue over the past six weeks, the Security Council found its way back to a unity of purpose, which was to provide Iraq's suffering people with necessary humanitarian goods.

My second important point is that we have enabled the Secretary-General and the Office of the Iraq Programme to restart the oil for food programme as soon as the situation on the ground permits. Once again, I should like to stress the dimension of this task. We heard from the Secretary-General that the food basket consists of 80 per cent of the goods coming from the oil for food programme. Sixty per cent of the people of Iraq depend on those rations: that is more than 40 million people who must be fed. They had to be fed before the war, they need food more now, and they will need it even more after the war.

I think the fact that the Security Council has taken this decision to enable the Secretary-General to feed Iraq's suffering population is a positive signal, and it has been strengthened by the adoption of the resolution by consensus in the Secretary-General's presence. It is a signal to the people of Iraq that they have not been forgotten, and it is a signal to the international community and to international humanitarian organizations that they must do whatever they can to alleviate the plight of a suffering people.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence here this morning and for the initiative he took in proposing that we work on this resolution. I think that today's Security Council vote modifying the oil for food programme marks an important step which the United States has favoured from the moment that United Nations personnel were withdrawn and the programme was suspended. We join others in welcoming the strong show of support by Council members for this resolution, which helps address the immediate needs of the people of Iraq.

We also thank the German delegation, led by Ambassador Pleuger, for the leadership they have shown in the negotiations over the past week which lead to the achievement of this resolution. Last, but certainly not least, we have benefited immensely from the advice and counsel of Mr. Benon Sevan, the Executive Director of the Office of the Iraq Programme, who has been with us throughout this process. We thank him very much.

We have full confidence that the Secretary-General and the United Nations Office of the Iraq Programme will effectively carry out the important task of resuming the programme in the weeks ahead. For its part, the United States will facilitate the necessary coordination on the ground in Iraq between coalition authorities and the United Nations and associated relief agency staff, as oil for food supplies and other humanitarian assistance arrive and are distributed as circumstances on the ground permit.

The resumption of the oil for food programme complements extensive United States efforts to address the humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq. Humanitarian aid from a variety of sources is already beginning to arrive. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are on the ground providing humanitarian assistance. Our own bilateral humanitarian aid commitments will remain robust and long-term. We urge all governments and donors to contribute generously in this effort.

The United States is gratified that the Council has been able come together to take this step to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq. Today's vote will translate into concrete results on the ground. We welcome that. The people of Iraq have suffered too long under circumstances not of their own choosing and under a regime whose days are numbered.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, who had warned us about these problems and who supported us throughout the discussions, reminding us, time and again, of the emergency nature of our work so we would arrive at an agreement on the text as soon as possible.

The French delegation is gratified at the result, the adoption of this very important text to enable the Iraqi people to receive the necessary food and medical supplies as soon as possible. It was important that the

text recall principles, humanitarian law instruments, in particular the Geneva Conventions, humanitarian access to the populations and Iraqi sovereignty over its resources. We also benefited from Mr. Benon Sevan's assistance in order to find the necessary technical adjustments to the oil for food programme in order to meet the most pressing needs. We fully trust the Secretary-General to implement the mandate we have now entrusted to him.

The French delegation was a sponsor of this text. It worked actively to ensure that the result would be rapidly forthcoming. We were worried when discussions lagged, and were very glad that results were achieved. We would like to pay tribute to the work of Ambassador Pleuger who helped us tremendously in finding this consensus.

In conclusion, we are glad the Security Council, on the basis of this humanitarian text, has recovered its unity. That is also a very important result.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): Bulgaria welcomes the fact that the Council has unanimously adopted this resolution, which deals with an especially urgent matter of major importance. First, we are grateful to Ambassador Pleuger and the German delegation for the excellent work they have done in recent days. I will repeat what I said yesterday. For Bulgaria, the adoption of this resolution would not have been possible without the political as well as moral prestige of the Secretary-General, who has brought all of his weight to bear behind these proposals. His influence and prestige have enabled us to regain our unity today. Bulgaria welcomes this as do other delegations.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I offer sincere congratulations to the German Ambassador and his team for their untiring and generous efforts, sensitivity, perseverance and their great elegance in leading this ship to a good port. I would like to reiterate the gratitude and appreciation of my delegation to the German Ambassador and his team.

After a few tense and somber days, today is an important day for the Council, due to the fact that it was able to unite to tackle a serious humanitarian issue.

As the Secretary-General aptly observed a few days ago, the peoples of the world might feel a sense of frustration when they witnessed what was happening in the United Nations Security Council. What happened today can serve to redress the situation, improve our image and restore the unity that must prevail in this important body.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

I would like, as the representative of Guinea, holding the presidency of this Council for the month of March, to express how gratified my delegation is at the unanimous adoption of this resolution on the emergency humanitarian situation in Iraq.

If this resolution had not been adopted, my delegation would be even sadder after all of our collective efforts during the month of March. The adoption of this resolution was indispensable to restoring the credibility of this body. In this regard, I thank the Secretary-General personally for his efforts to bring about this result, as well as the representative of Germany, our colleague Ambassador Pleuger, who did everything in his power during the entire week to establish unanimous support in the Council for this resolution. I thank him.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: I am very happy we have been able to adopt this resolution unanimously. I think it augurs well for future tasks ahead of us. We have many challenging questions and I hope we will be able to approach those tasks with the same spirit.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.